Renaissance Writing

"LOUIS MARKS is not a man with a head full of turnips", commented Robert Holmes. IN•VISION talked to the author of THE MASQUE OF MANDRAGORA and discovered just what was in his mind

HE MASQUE OF MANDRAGORA didn't start out as a Jacobean revenge tragedy. It started as a much more complicated idea which rather changed character half-way through the writing.

The actual starting point was Philip Hinchcliffe saying "We haven't done anything in a historical period setting for a long, long time". He was especially interested in doing something in late medieval history because he felt the period was interesting visually, and asked if I could come up with any ideas that would work against such a background.

He suggested vaguely Italy and the Renaissance, so that was the period I went away and researched around. Actually, I ended up doing a lot more reading than I had planned. From an earlier existence I hold a degree as a Doctor of Philosophy from a thesis I had written precisely about Italy and the way in which the Renaissance had affected that country — particularly Florence where so many of the new ideas came together. As far as I was concerned I was very happy being on home ground,

"I've taken you to some strange places before and you've never asked how you understood the local language. It's a Time Lord gift I allow you to share"

doing a **Doctor Who** where I felt comfortable with the background.

It was the idea of astrology that intrigued me. Astrology is, after all, trying to find the forces in the stars that actually affect us — that decide our destinies and so forth. So I applied what you might call *Doctor Who thinking* to that idea, to suggest 'what if these aren't just chance forces that come randomly from the planets after all? What if these

forces are being manipulated by somebody or something who is making them happen?' So the basic assumption arrived at was not just mumbojumbo, but a force within the Universe that could be controlled and directed.

Against that force you have the power of science, which becomes the Doctor's weapon. And he uses it first to understand the nature of his enemy, and

"Had it not been you, there would have been other travellers drawn into Mandragora's Helix. Earth had to be possessed and checked. Man's curiosity might lead him away from this planet until, ultimately, the galaxy itself might not contain him. We of Mandragora will not allow a rival power within our domain"

then finally to fight back against it. At the end of the story the Doctor harnesses the force and is able to feed it back on itself, which is how ultimately he defeats, through the *new knowledge*, the power of astrology.

That was the underlying beginning-to-end idea. Around that we populated images and characters from the Italian Renaissance period, the rivalries within a little kingdom, the plots, the intrigues, and so on. Interestingly, it was that background wallpapering that worked its way more and more into the story until it took over, and the whole thing came out looking like the setting for a Shakespearian or Jacobean tragedy play. That wasn't the intention, although I was pleased it worked. It worked well dramatically and visually with harrowing scenes in the torture chamber and the like, for which you must give a lot of credit to Rodney Bennett whose penchant is always for great seriousness in his work.



Giuliano and Sarah in the ruins of the temple



REMEMBER Philip Hinchcliffe telling me there had been complaints about the torture scenes, even though you didn't see anything brutal actually happening. Now that is something that does make me wild: the assumption that violence on television begets violence in real life. Everyman recently showed a report from Derek Burke in South Africa which featured absolutely horrific violence. Is that caused by television? I doubt it. I doubt if people in the black townships watch much television.

If you take the periods of the most extreme violence in Western society over the last one hundred years, they are totally unrelated to television. It's just an easy target for people to identify and hit. Television does have an influence, but I don't think a major one in relation to all the other causes one might care to examine in an analysis of violence.

A scene of someone having suffered torture might jolt some viewers for a moment or two, but the image is very ephemeral. So much more will come along two seconds later to supercede it that any attention span given to that scene is very limited.

At no time was there any intention on my part other than to write a thrilling yarn for **Doctor Who**. And yet, after MANDRAGORA had gone out, one of my colleagues from when I was working up in the East Tower (at Television Centre) knocked on my door one evening and said: "Saw your drama on **Doctor Who** — very deep, I thought. Very deep..." That left me wondering, "What on Earth have I done?"

Promoting the Doctor

THE MASQUE OF MANDRAGORA (serial 4M) spearheaded the BBC's 1976 Autumn Season. ALISON BAUGET looks at the official publicity material

HE most obvious promotion of THE MASQUE OF MANDRAGORA was an article in the *Radio Times*. There was also of course the usual collection of trailers for the new season.

The Radio Times article, unusually, featured an interview with the show's producer, Philip Hinchcliffe. Of the new story he remarked: "We have sword-play, horse-riding and magic. I think it's a marvellous mixture." He also commented on the new (old) TARDIS control-room, "It's rather dusty and Edwardian inside. But we invited members of the Dr Who Appreciation Society to inspect the controls and I'm assured they're in good working order."

The preview trailers for the programme were more traditional. The TARDIS materialises amid a voiceover proclaiming the new series. Then follows a montage of the Doctor examining a piece of glassware and deducing when and where they have arrived... "Not a very pleasant time", he comments ruefully. The trailer concludes with the Mandragora Helix energy whizzing across a stretch of water and zapping an unfortunate local. Cut back to the Doctor for the tag line: "Mandragora energy — and I brought it here!"

But what of the material actually released by the BBC for promotion of the programme before its arrival on the small screen? The standard material released lists the title, author and transmission dates. It then outlines the "Selling Points" of the programme, and story.

The story synopsis is usually lifted directly from the *Drama Early Warning Synopsis* prepared by the producer, and that was the case for THE MASQUE OF MANDRAGORA.

This Early Warning Synopsis lists the usual programme information (down to name of script editor, and project number - 02346/2101-4 in this case). It also has standard areas to be filled in concerning the author, director (if known at this stage), when and in which studio the show was recorded, the approximate size of the cast and the set and film requirements. For THE MASQUE OF MANDRAGORA, only the author, director, project number and recording weeks are listed (and the recording weeks are listed incorrectly). This could mean that the information was not yet available, but the fact that the form bears the show's transmission title, not the working title of CATACOMBS OF DEATH, suggests that such information is usually omitted rather than not known. The Type of drama is listed as "Science Fiction adventure".

Half the form is comprised of the plot outline, with information that is not for publication enclosed in brackets. This story had no confidential information listed, and so the outline could be lifted intact and complete for the promotional material. The synopsis is reproduced on the panel.

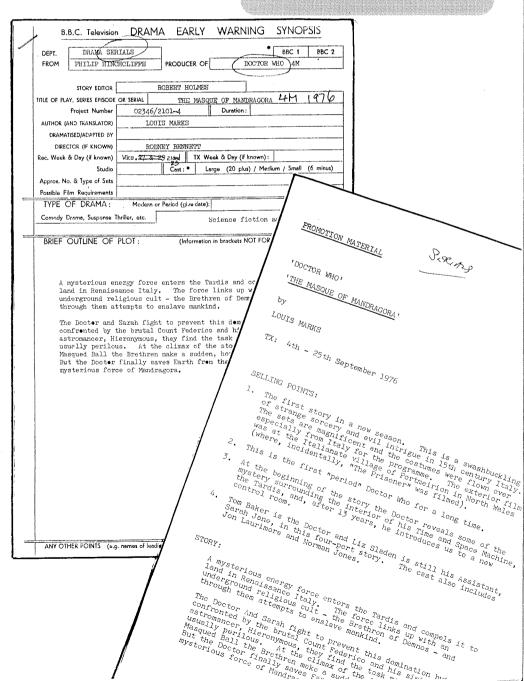
The first half of the Promotion Material is composed of the *Selling Points*. For THE MASQUE OF MANDRAGORA the BBC stressed four points. The first is that this is the first story of a new **Who** season. It is described as "a swashbuckling tale of strange sorcery and evil intrigue in 15th century Italy", and attention is drawn to the Portmeirion location (with

reference to **The Prisoner**) and the authenticity of the costumes (see *Production*). Having explained all this, is seems a little redundant that the second 'selling point' is that this is the first *period* story for "a long time". The longevity of the show hinted at here is stressed in the third point, which is that the Doctor reveals "some of the mystery surrounding the interior of his Time and Space Machine, the Tardis (sic), and, after thirteen years, he introduces us to a new control room." The final selling point of the story is the presence of Tom Baker and Elisabeth Sladen, supported by Jon Laurimore and Norman Jones.

It is interesting to note, especially given the ITV opposition to the show (see *Audience*), that science fiction is mentioned nowhere in the publicity and promotion.

MYSTERIOUS energy force enters the Tardis and compels it to land in Renaissance Italy. The force links up with an underground religious cult — the Brethren of Demnos — and through them attempts to enslave mankind.

The Doctor and Sarah fight to prevent this domination but, confronted by the brutal Count Federico and his sinister astromancer, Hieronymous, they find the task more than usually perilous. At the climax of the story during a Masqued Ball the Brethren make a sudden, horrifying appearance. But the Doctor finally saves Earth from the cult and the mysterious force of Mandragora.





Portrait of Savanarola (from a medal)

Choice Ita

MARTIN WIGGINS analyses Doctor Who's return to the

N his 'novelisation' of THE MASQUE OF MANDRAGORA (serial 4M), published fifteen months after its transmission, Philip Hinchliffe set the story in the year 1492. The date has no authority from the televised version, but it is appropriate. 1492 was an annus mirabilis in European culture and politics that saw the death of Lorenzo the Magnificent, the birth of Aretino, and the election of the Borgia Pope, Alexander VI. Most importantly, it is ingrained in Western minds as the year in which Columbus set sail on the voyage of discovery that gave Europe a New World to conquer.

Both visually and culturally, the period detail is first-rate. Especially impressive is the way minutiae are used to build up the impression of an aristocratic court culture in San Martino. We see Count Federico playing chess in episode one, and winning — a sign of intellect and cunning that Robert Holmes was always fond of. But then we see more: his opponent makes a theatrical gesture, the spectators break into a round of applause. It has all been a performance: the Count may well be capable of winning at chess, but because he *is* a Count, in these circumstances he can't lose — no-one dares beat him. Minutes later, when the Doctor has tried explaining helix energy to him scientifically, everyone waits for his reaction to the apparent gobbledegook; only when he laughs do they have the confidence to laugh too.

This may not be at all surprising, because we tend to expect a touch of egoism and arrogance from the villain. Where we don't expect it is in Duke Giuliano, a sympathetic character who expresses concern for the people; but he too knows his place. When he's entertaining the Doctor and Sarah in episode two,

he casually orders Marco to fetch wine, and Marco obeys. The moment is totally unstressed but enormously suggestive: we have seen that the two men are friends, but Marco accepts the menial role of wine waiter without raising an eyebrow. If we do, it's because we expect friendship to be based on equality; but in a Renaissance court, everyone, no matter how noble, was a servant of the prince. Marco, we see, is no exception.

UT the Renaissance isn't just the setting for THE MASQUE OF MANDRAGORA, but its subject; so if we're to get to the bottom of the story, we must get back behind Louis Marks the dramatist to his earlier incarnation as Dr L. F. Marks, the Balliol historian and author of a doctoral thesis on the economic history of late republican Florence. His studies in the Italian Renaissance are the subsoil out of which THE MASQUE OF MANDRAGORA was created, and contribute much to the story's richness and density. For example, the names of some of the principal characters crop up in his period: Giuliano de'Medici, brother of Lorenzo; Federico da Montefeltro, Duke of Urbino; the Convent of San Marco, of whose Prior we shall hear more shortly. (However, Captain Rossini and the off-screen torturer Scarlatti seem to be named after later Italian composers!)

The names which are most important, however, which contain the key to the story, are Hieronymous and Mandragora. Hieronymous is the Latin form of Girolamo, which was the personal name of Savonarola (1452-98), a major figure in Florentine history; Louis Marks published an article on him in 1952. As Prior of San Marco, he was given to making apocalyptic statements which catapulted

him from ecclesiastical to political importance when his 'prophesies' began to come true. Seeing himself as God's messenger to a corrupt land, and Florence as (to quote Marks) "the centre from which the light of purity and truth would spread over the whole of Italy", he came to power after a palace revolution expelled Piero de'Medici, and thereafter controlled a popular theocratic government for more than three years. Among the best-known incidents of his regime was the 'Bonfire of the Vanities' in 1497, when books, carnival masks and 'immoral' works of art were incinerated in a public ceremony of purification. Opposed by the papacy and the upper classes of Florence, in 1498 he was challenged to prove his divine mission in an ordeal by fire (which was rained off), and executed six weeks later.

There are some clear similarities here with the career of the astrologer of San Martino, Louis Marks' fictional Hieronymous. He too finds that his predictions are coming true, and not just because Count Federico is faking the results with poison: he feels "as if my powers were growing, as if I had been chosen to be granted visions of the future"; but his dominion is to extend not just over Italy but the world. His first step to power is to supervise a masque-massacre of intellectuals and statesmen destroying books at source, so to speak. The principal difference is that he emerges from the 'heavenly fire' of Mandragora energy with his vocation certain: "You and you alone will carry out our will on Earth." This is important because both men lack "shrewd political understanding" (as Marks puts it): several times Hieronymous provokes Federico by flouting the rules of court behaviour we've seen demonstrated - failing to rise in the Count's presence, for instance. As "supreme ruler of Earth"-designate, he feels entitles to his insolence, but he forgets that away from the temple he is a weak creature of flesh and blood, and repeatedly he has to back down when the Count rises to the challenge. Savonarola ultimately failed because of his limited political aptitude, Hieronymous succeeds, for a time, in spite of it: he has a 'god' behind him, after all. So, sublimating himself body and soul to Mandragora, he dies, his energy drained away, with a despairing, useless cry of help to the mighty master of all things.

Mandragora has associations with a very different figure. La Mandragola (which translates into English as *The Mandrake-Root* or, more succinctly, The Mandragora) is the title of an early sixteenthcentury comedy of sexual intrigue, written by Niccolo Machiavelli (1469-1527), the civil servant, political theorist and historian of Florence. The play itself contains nothing that is directly relevant to THE MASQUE OF MANDRAGORA; the name serves as a reference to its author. For nearly a century after his death, Machiavelli was hated and feared throughout Europe, because he was the first important Renaissance thinker to ignore moral and spiritual considerations: he wrote, as Sir Francis Bacon shrewdly put it, about "what men do, not what they ought to do"; even today, his name retains connotations of devious political unscrupulousness. In fact, his analysis of statecraft and human behaviour has a lucidity which Louis Marks evidently admired: more than once he quotes, with approval, Machiavelli's assessment of Savonarola.

It is no problem that Mandragora is too nebulous a 'character' to link persuasively to the historical



The Doctor and a friend prepare for the Masque (the Doctor is on the right)

lian

historical story

Machiavelli: the story is not an allegory of Florentine politics, and Marks has said that he "never intended any specific impersonation". The point is that the two men crystallise two distinct philosophies: the obscurantism of medieval Christianity, and the rationality of the new humanism. The Renaissance was (as the Doctor puts it) "the period between the dark ages of superstition and the dawn of a new reason"; it saw the triumph of the secular as Man displaced God as the centre of the universe. And that is what Mandragora finds threatening.

attempt at learning would be suppressed". This is not a clear-cut opposition between revolution and reaction, because Federico has no ideological opposition to the Renaissance: he is, in fact, a product of it. He shares Giuliano's scepticism about Hieronymous' powers: "You can no more tell the stars than you can tell my chamber pot," he tells the soothsayer in a comic analogy with reading tealeaves. The difference between uncle and nephew is the difference between the two aspects of the Renaissance, between Leonardo da Vinci and Machiavelli, between the intellectual and the political.

Giuliano's aspirations and ideals make him appealing, but he is also the victim of much of the story's irony, forever out of step with the facts. He

HE sub-plot of the local politics of San Martino helps give a more human backbone to this rarefied conflict between science and superstition. It also helps explain one of the difficulties with the Machiavelli and Savonarola analogies: the fact that the forces of reason and obscurantism, opposed in reality, seem here to be on the same side in Mandragora and Hieronymous.

The basic conflict of the sub-splot is between Giuliano, with his enthusiasm for the new learning, and Federico, under whose rule "all knowledge, all is determined not to regard the helix energy as a fire demon, but in *quinquecento* terms, that is exactly what it is — the Doctor tells him of "spirits from the heavens" and "a wheel of fire". He considers Hieronymous to be "of no consequence", and puzzles over the accurate prediction of the old Duke's death while we see Federico and the soothsayer discussing the poison that was used. He insists that the heavens are objects for study, not determinants of human destiny, yet that is the very role Mandragora would adopt. Human science is at an early stage, to be sure — even Leonardo's submarine design is faulty — but the Doctor assures Giuliano that understanding will all come in time. The danger is that it may not have that time. Scepticism has become another form of faith for Giuliano, and it prevents him seeing the danger the stars, the helix energy, and the court astrologer could pose: when he looks up to the stars, he confounds knowledge with knowledge.

One of the role-models for Giuliano, an indecisive scholar-prince with faithful friend and wicked uncle, is clearly Hamlet; but THE MASQUE OF MANDRAGORA is not a revenge drama. Federico is the most obvious threat to him now that he is Duke, but knowing this he will not take action to secure his position. He flinches from violence: when Marco advises that the defeated Rossini be executed, he procrastinates. He is a gentle humanist unequipped to cope with the realities of power: it is Marco, impetuous though he is, who supplies all the political decisions in the story. Giuliano prefers his scholarship: he is so engrossed in telling Sarah his new 'spherical world' theory that he does not hear, or doesn't want to hear, Federico's troops arriving to slaughter him. If he began his Dukedom as Hamlet, he could easily end it as Prospero: that he does not meet a bloody death in the dungeon of his own palace, to make way for the stronger Federico, is pure chance; he has done nothing himself to prevent it. The conventional happy ending keeps this at the level of a sub-text, but it is clear that power comes not to Shakespeare's prince, but to Machiavelli's.

From Federico's brutal suppression of a peasnt insurrection to Marco's insistence that the masque be held because Giuliano cannot risk a display of weakness before the rulers of other states, the power game is a constant background in San Martino: the city tries to retain control of the outlying villages, like Florence over Pisa in Marks' period, and it must defend itself in turn from those who would control it. It is a game which requires cunning and ruthlessness, qualities inculcated by the new secularism and codified in Machiavelli; but it also requires a minimum of opposition. If the new reason can brief a Federico to poison his way to power, it could do the same for another would-be-Duke — a good argument for suppressing learning and promoting superstition, for a Machiavelli to use a Savonarola.

Now we can see the import of Hinchcliffe's Columbus reference, if reference it be. For Louis Marks, the conceptual and philosophical changes that took place during the Renaissance turned Western Man from subsistence to conquest: Florence transformed from a city state into the Grand Duchy of Tuscany; the colonisation of the Americas soon followed; and, Mandragora extrapolates, mankind will develop into a rival power in the galaxy. This is the era from which all subsequent human achievements flow: it is a decisive moment in history at which Mandragora must intervene if it is to change

the future. The reactionary forces of the time are useful agents: for obvious reasons Marks does not use the Roman Catholic church, but the Cult of Demnos, with its vestments and Latin liturgy, is still very monkish. Through the Cult and its cynically exploited leader, mankind will ne "thrown back into a new dark age", will become "idle, mindless, useless sheep". The Helix will live up to its name: mandragora, the infusion of the mandrake-root, was a narcotic drug, and the soponfic effects of this Mandragora will spread through all humanity. Darkness and decay and the Mandragora Helix will hold illimitable dominion over all.



Producti

N the summer of 1976 THE SONTARAN EXPERIMENT (serial 4B) and PLANET OF EVIL (serial 4H) were repeated unedited. Both stories had drawn criticism on their first run, the former for its portrayal of sadistic torture, the latter for its body horror. But Hinchcliffe and Holmes knew that the shows they were making were gaining bigger and bigger audiences. And ratings rather than the comments of the National Viewers' and Listeners' Association still held sway at the BBC (see Audience). The July week of Doctor Who repeats on peak-time BBC1 had an average of six million viewers; a considerable achievement in the extremely hot summer of 1976. So it was with its future more secure than ever that Doctor Who's serial 4M, THE MASQUE OF MANDRAGORA, went into production.

The script

On the strength of the ratings his programme was getting, producer Philip Hinchcliffe again justified an increase in the show's budget in real terms. Compared with the Plays and Light Entertainments departments it was not a large sum, but it was **Doctor Who**'s highest level of funding yet. It also gave Hinchcliffe a stronger lever to use in his efforts to persuade the best people in the business to work on the programme.

Among those people was playwright Louis Marks, who was playing an increasing role as a television producer. His acceptance of a commission to write for season 14 was a

The scripted description of the Helix energy



Federico shows a Christian attitude — a sequence cut from the transmitted programme

significant coup for **Doctor Who** (see *Renaissance writing*, elsewhere in this issue, and *Full Marks*, in **IN•VISION** issue eight).

With the skills of Louis Marks to draw on, Hinchcliffe and Script Editor Robert Holmes decided to tackle a historically-based cotume drama. In the Spring of 1976, BBC2 had screened a season of films by the low budgethorror master, Roger Corman. Among them was his celebrated adaption of Poe's *The Masque of the Red Death*, starring Vincent Price. It was this film, as well as recent his recent reading about the era of Machiavelli, which inspired Hinchcliffe to try a similar venture into the medieval Gothic in **Doctor Who**.

Philip Hinchliffe told IN VISION: "I'd been to Portmeirion in Wales, and seen Roger Corman's Masque of the Red Death, and thought 'let's do something like that'. I went up to Portmeirion with Rodney Bennett to do a recce, and worked out that we could do it. Bob Holmes had always said: 'These historicals are boring'. I said we could do quite an interesting historical one, and give it some bite — not people being terribly friendly and saying 'Hello, Marco Polo!' I said we should do one about the Machiavelli Italian era. And it worked out quite well."

The centrepiece of the **Who** could also be an extravagant Masque Ball infiltrated by the villains. Again drawing on the Gothic icons of Corman's film, Hinchcliffe wanted the production to feature a malign religious sect dressed in monks' robes with the cowls making them in effect faceless to the audience.

With some visual elements to write in, and the brief of a costume drama, Marks began work on his script. Robert Holmes explained the other ideas that Louis Marks worked from: "The starting point for MANDRAGORA was an idea Louis had that there might be — or at some time might have been — some basis for the 'science' of astrology. That the stars, in fact, did have an influence on human affairs.

"We tried to rationalise this idea, developing it in **Doctor Who** terms, and this led us to Demnos. We also decided that, if the story was to work properly, it should be placed in an era when astrology was taken very seriously."

The story was a definitive element of Hinchliffe and Holmes' **Doctor Who**, as John Tulloch and Manuel Alavardo observed: "The Gothic element was lurking closely beneath the surface with the science of Da Vinci's era threatened — and the maiden Sarah Jane threatened as was symptomatic of the Gothic — by the dark monkish practices and endless catacomb corridors".

Provisional titles for the production were 'Catacombs of Death' and 'The Curse of Mandragora'.

Given that Renaissance Italy not only fitted the bill perfectly, but was also a specialist subject of Marks' (see *Choice Italian* this issue), the setting for the story was an obvious choice. The problem for the production team now was to find a real location for the filming of the story.

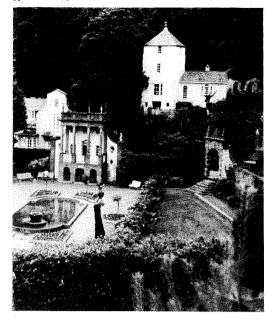
Location work

The village of Portmeirion, a popular tourist spot in North Wales, was chosen as the location setting for San Martino. The village, which includes hotel and gardens, were the work of architect Sir Clough Williams-Ellis, whose creative inspiration for this gigantic folly was the Renaissance harbour town of Portofino in Italy.

Its distinct, middle-European appearance, constructed over several decades, made Portmeirion a particular favourite for British television productions looking for continental locations on small budgets. Shows which have used Portmeirion include Danger Man and The Tripods, and its most familiar appearance was as 'The Village' in the enigmatic Patrick McGoohan vehicle The Prisoner.

Williams-Ellis lived in Portmeirion, and gave permission for filming there. He met and talked with members of the production team and cast during location work, and Tom Baker later fondly





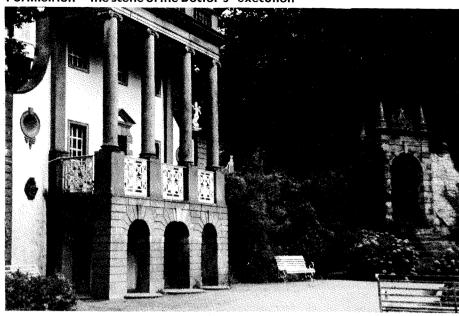
recalled his conversation with the architect as "meeting one of the last of the true Great British eccentrics".

The many post-Renaissance aspects of Portmeirion had to be hidden or disguised during location work. For example, fully-glazed windows had to be concealed — for close-ups, senior BBC designer Barry Newbery hid them by covering them with drapes or false shutters, or by camouflaging them with sheets of coloured felt that would blend in with the stonework.

For long shots, particularly the pursuit of the Doctor by the Count's soldiers, the village background was hidden by hanging drapes and tapestries in the foreground, close to the camera



The Doctor remembers his fencing lessons from Cleopatra's bodyguard



and restricting its field of view.

The production team spent a six day week in Portmeirion, with a brief night shoot scheduled in the middle. A lot of work was needed to hide the village architecture, and these scenes were shot in the latter half of the week. Two camera units were in operation, led by Dave White and Peter Granger. For the first two days, one camera team used the hill gardens and woods behind Portmeirion to shoot the orange grove and ruined temple exteriors. Once they had finished their scenes, the team rejoined the second unit in the village for the chase and execution block sequences — every sequence of which was carefully planned and filmed to avoid anachronisms in shot.

Despite unusually good weather, the woodland scenes used extra illumination from giant, orange-tinted floodlights to establish the mediterranean location. Similarly, and despite a variety of available tropical trees and plants, the crew hung oranges from some trees on wires.

In Marks' original storyline, the ruined temple was all above ground. But both cost and technical problems ruled this out as the setting for the Mandragora 'miracle' of restoring the buildings. A rewrite added the passageway down to the underground (and hence studio) crypt, and the only location requirements were thus a mocked-up cave entrance, and some stock BBC columns to suggest where the full temple had once stood.

Stunts

Terry Walsh was kept very busy, supervising the horseback stunts and the fight scenes. Although an accomplished rider, Walsh did not double for the Doctor on horseback scenes in case an accident should prevent him carrying out his other duties for the rest of the week. He did, though, double for several of the characters in the swordfight between the Doctor, Guiliano, Federico's men and the brethren in the triple-cliffhanger ending to part two.

That swordfight was slightly re-edited in postproduction when it was decided to make Sarah's recapture by the High Priest the actual closing shot of the episode. Originally, the ending was to have been Giuliano being wounded by a soldier, with the final shot of Federico yelling: "Death to Giuliano!". But with the emphasis shifting to Sarah's plight, Federico's cry was recut to the start of the fight.

Effects

The location special effects were limited, but posed some challenged for Ian Scoones and his assistant Mat Irvine. At one point, the script called for the wave of helix energy to shoot across a lake before frying a luckless peasant fisherman.

Ian Scoones explained: "Where it hit the lake, I timed a huge explosion to go off in the water. You then saw it zig-zag towards us. It was a sort of electronic fuse, a firework that goes underwater. When this waterproofed fuse goes off underwater, it produces extraordinary effects — such as bubbles and smoke. It looks mysterious.

"The fuse was about 20 feet long, and all I did was to tape a bit of rock to one and lob it out into the water. I saw where it fell, and put out main explosion just above it in the water. By setting them both off at the same time, you get the explosion, and the fuse coming towards you.

"A stuntman called Stuart Fell, who works with us a lot, was dressed up as a peasant who tries to fight off this unearthly thing as it comes towards him. His pitchfork had to catch fire. Both were done by gas, with the pipe going away from the handle which you did not see. We had a little fuse that would ignite it on cue."

The same method was used to provide the wreaths of smoke that swirled around the dummy cadavers after the helix victims had been 'ionised'.

Studio effects

One of the most spectacular effects in the alter scenes, Heironymous bathed in a column of fire, was one of the easiest to do: the column of fire was a soft-focus, superimposed image of a red-bulbed Sixties 'lava lamp' (of the kind often seen



in *The Prisoner*, by curious coincidence). A spark machine was used for the lightning flashes of the Helix energy surging between the brethren, with hidden smoke tubes within the costumes to give the impression of charred, gloved hands.

For Ian Scoones, the big challenge in the studio were the scenes of the TARDIS in the Mandragora Helix, in part one. The plan was to do this in three model stages.

The first stage: a distant shot of the >

The new TARDIS control room — note the third Doctor's jacket

✓ Mandragora star cluster, a model nebula five feet across which was mounted on a turntable, sprayed with 'Scotchlite' paint to make it glow with Front Axial Projection (FAP). The second: closer to the hub of the star field, a tank of water that could be spun into a whirlpool with a vortex generator — small quantities of white, polystyrene granules were added to the water, giving the impression of particles whilring into the centre of the helix. The third: as the TARDIS arrives in 'The Titan Hall', a wire-framed spiral, strung with coloured crystals and used both for the model TARDIS materialisation shot, and as a

For all three phases, the TARDIS model and the console room sequences were photographed as reflections in a stretched foil mirror, so that the images could be distorted on cue, just like the Ice Warrior gunshot effect of previous stories.

ChromaKeved background for live action.

However, on the day of recording, Rodney Bennett was reportedly very unimpressed with the phase one model, thinking that it looked too much like a giant danish pastry. Although footage of the model was recorded, only a split second was ever used, as distorted link image between the vortex and crystal hall sets.

Another effect which needed a rethink was the faceless Hieronymous, first seen at the end of



Hieronymous is possessed

part three. Originally, the plan was for Norman Jones to wear a mask of coloured cloth beneath his Demnos mask, and the radiance of the Mandragora Helix possessing him would be keyed onto the cloth. The problem was one of



The large model nebula



luminosity — even without his Demnos mask, the result was just a blank field of colour, without radiance. So on the day, insert shots were recorded of the cowled costume wrapped around a studio lamp.

Costumes

A big budget saving was the costumes. The wardrobe for the serial was hired from stock held by Italian studios that had made Franco Zefferelli's *Romeo and Juliet* four years earlier. Publicised as a first for **Doctor Who**, this involved flying the costumes from Italy. But then costume designer James Acheson discovered that the wardrobe that studio management was renting out was stock from the 1952 version of 'Romeo and Juliet (starring Laurence Harvey, and directed by Renato Castellani).

New TARDIS

Apart from his period studio and location sets, Barry Newbery's other great contribution to this story was the refurbished TARDIS. The new police box, more faithful to the original London boxes than previous versions, was far lighter than the previous prop. It was made up of six parts: a square base with castors and channeled grooves, into which the four side and door panels slotted. The roof section fitted last, with all the panels then secured with latch pins.

The control room interior was the result of a total rethink by Hinchcliffe, Newbery, and



lan Scoones creates the Mandragora Helix from polystyrene and a vortex generator

director Rodney Bennett. The old TARDIS control room had three particular problems. Firstly, it was large and used a lot of studio space, often just for link scenes. Secondly, the console was also large — if two people stood either side, obtaining a well-composed two-shot was difficult. Thirdly, the mechanism which moved the time rotor up and down was increasingly unreliable.

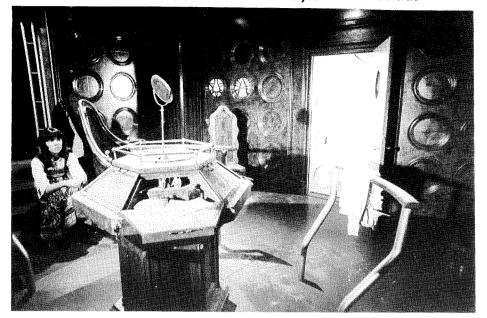
Newbery's answer was the 'secondary control room', a smaller and more interesting split-level set in brass and dark wood, reminiscent of Jules Verne's *Nautilus* submarine. The walls were all interlinking units which could be unlatched and rearranged to facilitate the addition of extra doors, storage cupboards and recesses.

The walls themselves were plywood, attached to light timber frames and with wood veneer wallpaper pasted on top of suggest a more expensive finish. Rows of holes were cut into each at regular, rather than staggered, levels, and in one row were moulded circles of coloured plastic, suggesting stained glass. An early idea to have lights whirling behind these circles to suggest the ship in flight (a variation on the idea proposed by Peter Brachacki when he devised the original TARDIS interior for AN UNEAR-THLY CHILD, serial A) was abandoned as being too distracting.

A problem with the old TARDIS main doors was that they were too cumbersome, and were difficult to rehang after long periods in storage. To overcome this, the new TARDIS set was designed without visible doors: the arched exit led instead to a veil of black curtains, suggesting the limbo between the interior and exterior dimensions.

Early construction drawings allowed for a standard BBC monitor to be fixed behind the scanner screen doors. But problems with picture luminosity meant that a ChromaKey image was used instead (for example, the first view of the Mandragora Helix).

The staircase bannisters and the podium railings were all fibreglass moulded sections, but the control console was mainly wood and brass. For THE MASQUE OF MANDRAGORA, only one of the hinged top panels opened to reveal a control panel beneath it. Others, it was planned, would be added in later stories as the need arose. Rodney Bennett wanted the top of the console to have an iris mechanism fitted which would open to reveal a dome full of instruments, rising to provide the Doctor with navigational information. The idea was vetoed by Hinchcliffe, partly because the of the earlier concern about mechanical reliability, and partly because the cost of the story was already very high (and



despite the idea that the new TARDIS costs were supposed to be spread across all six serials of season 14). The circle for the iris was cut in the top but never used, and so was concealed in this story by placing a shaving mirror on top.

As an additional touch, reminders of the previous Doctors were dotted around the room: a Sheraton chair for Hartnell, a ruffled shirt and jacket for Pertwee, and a recorder for Troughton.

The old TARDIS set, or parts of it, did make an appearance in the serial — as the corridors



Federico and Hieronymous

through which the Doctor and Sarah walk to reach the new room. One idea that was scrapped was to have a caption slide of the old control room inlaid with ChromaKey as a distant background to the first: cost, time, and line-up concerns prevented that. A vestige of the idea did survive, however, in the 'boot cupboard' joke.

BBC Visual effects designer Peter Logan later explained some of the reasons for the new set: "There have always been lines of demarcation as to who should actually operate and move about the Tardis console. It was one of those bones of contention... The console was so big and props always used to say 'No, it's not our job to move it', visual effects said 'Well, we only operate it and make all the things happen on it so therefore; and the scene crew used to side with props and say 'It is certainly nothing to do with us', and in the end it used to be left out in the Ring Road for all and sundry to come along and play with with the knobs or whatever.

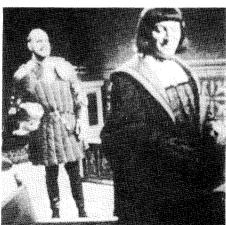
"So they decided they would write something different into the story which didn't actually do a lot by way of effects but was small enough to put into a props cage, and this I think was one of the reasons for the change. Also the mechanical devices which made it go up and down and light up in the middle was also going across lines of demarcation because the electricians even today

say it is their job to make it go up and down and not ours, and we are saying 'No, it is our job to make the effects happen because it is an effect'." Effects designer Mat Irvine: "The original console was constructed mostly from wood and survived until relatively recently. The main problem with this version was that it would only fit together one way, and given that it was a hexagon you sometimes had to try all six options before the hexagonal top fitted into the hexagonal centre. Six panels fitted into the six positions, with a variety of knobs, dials and switches on each.

"The Time Rotor in the centre... was powered by a large electrical motor which turned a cam attached to a connecting rod, in turn attached to the base of the Time Rotor. This was quite heavy and so put quite a lot of strain on the motor and mechanics. Besides making a noise it gradually, over the seasons, got more and more worn and the Effects team were forever servicing it in an attempt to keep it going.

The alternative control room was somewhat different from the original, with a different console. There was a definite Edwardian feel to the whole surroundings, echoed by the much smaller console. The console still retained the six sides but the panels were far more discreet, each being hidden away under a flap. However, the usual lamps and switches prevailed, though there was a slightly more logical layout to them."

Most of these background walls were painted



Rossini awaits Federico's next Machiavellian gambit

backdrops or hanging tapestries, although other arches had sheets of painted gauze stretched between them to give a more ghostly image to the temple architecture when illuminated.

The second Doctor's recorder



Other sets

The other very complex set in this serial was the temple crypt. It was in two parts. The main altar area was permanently visible, surrounded by columns and arches leading off into darkness. Then as the Mandragora 'miracle' happens, other floor-level studio lights came on to highlight the remainder of the set background.

Sound

Rodney Bennett also paid special attention to sound and music in MASQUE. Peter Tuddenham's voice and laughter as the Mandragora



The Doctor and Sarah hide from the Helix energy

Titan was pre-recorded and modulated with reverberation and echo. Norman Jones also pre-recorded some of his lines, so that they could be mimed by Tom Baker 'impersonating' him in part four.

Dudley Simpson's score alternated between synthesised music for the Helix scenes, and traditional mediaeval chamber music for the period setting. He also reused (with some alterations) the four-bar 'Doctor's Theme' first composed for THE ARK IN SPACE (serial 4C), used for example when the Doctor works out how Mandragora can "swallow the moon".

Continuity

The Doctor reveals the reason why Sarah can understand Italian (and other tongues alien to her): it is a Time Lord gift he has shared with her.

Transmission

The opening and closing credits used a new, serif typeface for the story titles and cast/crew details. The first part of MASQUE was first transmitted on Saturday, September 4 at 6.10pm, winning favourable press comment. Initial ratings of 8.3 million rose to 10.6 for part four, setting the pace for what was to be **Doctor Who's** most-watched series.

Lontext

The Doctor tries to remember how tall Sarah is



CAST

	Tom Baker
SARAH JANE SMITH	Elisabeth Sladen
COUNT FEDERICO.	John Laurimore
CAPTAIN ROSSINI	Antony Carrick
GIULIANO	Gareth Armstrong
MARCO	Tim Piggott-Smith
	Norman Jones
	Robert James
BROTHER	Brian Ellis
	Pat Gorman (1)
GUARDS	James Appleby, John Clamp (2)
PIKEMEN	Peter Walshe, Jay Neill (2)
TITAN VOICE	Peter Tuddenham (2)
DANCERS	
Peggy Dixon, Jack E	dwards, Alistair Fullarton, Michael
	Reid, Kathy Wolff (4)

ENTERTAINERStuart Fell (4)

6.10 New series Dr Who

starring Tom Baker
in Masque of Mandragora
A four-part story by Louis Marks
1: An evil intruder in the Tardis
caught in a dark world of intrigue

Dr Who......TOM BAKER
Sarah Jane.....ELISABETH SLADEN
Count Federico....JON LAURIMORE
ANTONY CARRICK COULTE FEGERICO....JON LAURIMORE
Captain Rossini...ANTONY CARRICK
Soldier...PAT GORMAN
Giuliano...GARETH ARMSTRONG
TIM PLOOTE-SMITH Marco.....GARETH ARMSTRONG
Marco....TIM PIGOTT-SMITH
Hieronymous...NORMAN JONES
High Priest....ROBERT JAMES
Rrother...ROBERT JAMES Brother.....BRIAN ELLIS

Incidental music by
DUDLEY SIMPSON
SCRIPT Editor ROBERT HOLMES
Designer BARRY NEWBERY
PRODUCET PHILIP HINCHCLIFFE
Director RODNEY BENNETT

Small & Non-speaking

EXTRAS
Michael Mulcaster (1), Maurice Quick (1), Lionel Taylor

(1), Colin Ianson (1), David Glynn Rogers (1), Mary Rennie (1), Colli Raison (1), David Gylin Rogers (1), Mary Refinite (1), Paul Barton (1), Lincoln Wright (1), David Rolfe (1), David Wilde (1), Clinton Morris (1-2), George Ballantine (1-2), Ken Tracey (1,3-4), Penny Lambirth (1,4), Christopher Holmes (1-4), Martin Clarke (2-4), Eddie Sommer (3), Martin Grant (3-4), Neville Ware (3-4), Derek Chafer (3-4), Kevin Moran (3-4), Jess Willard (3-4), Jean Channon (4), Sheila Vivian (4), Barbara Bernell (4), Jill Goldston (4)

Stuart Fell (1-3), Billy Horrigan (3), Bronco McLoughlin (3), Terry Walsh (3), Peter Pocock (3-4), Roy Street (3-4), Tex Fuller (3-4), Paddy Ryan (3-4)

CREW

	Cq w _a
PRODUCTION ASSISTANT	Thea Murray
ASSISTANT FLOOR MANAGE	CR Linda Graeme
DIRECTOR'S ASSISTANT	Hazel Marriott
FLOOR ASSISTANT	Jim Burge
STUDIO LIGHTING	Dennis Channon
TECHNICAL MANAGERS	Henry Barber
STUDIO SOUND	
GRAMS OPERATOR	Don Slater
VISION MIXER	Graham Giles
INLAY OPERATOR	Dave Chapman
SENIOR CAMERAMEN	
Dave Whit	e (1), Peter Granger (2-4)
CREW	? (1), 10 (2-4)
FILM CAMERAMAN	John Baker
FILM SOUND	
FILM EDITOR	
ARMOURER	
COSTUME DESIGNER	James Acheson
MAKE-UP ARTIST	Jan Harrison

MAKE-UP ASSISTANTS	
Hadsera Coouadia, Vivian Riley,	Carolyn Buisuinne.
Christine Wheeler, Suzanne Jansen	
VISUAL EFFECTS DESIGNER	Ian Scoones
VISUAL EFFECTS ASSISTANT	Mat Irvine
DESIGNER	Barry Newbery
DESIGN ASSISTANT	Les McCallum
INCIDENTAL MUSIC	Dudley Simpson
SPECIAL SOUND	Dick Mills
PRODUCTION UNIT MANAGER	
Chri	stopher D'Oyly-John
WRITER	
SCRIPT EDITOR	Robert Holmes

DIRECTORRodney Bennett

TRANSMISSION

Part 1: 4th September, 1976, 18.12.00 (24'31") Part 2: 11th September 1976, 18.07.04 (24'44") Part 3: 18th September 1976, 18.11.35 (24'34") Part 4: 25th September 1976, 18.12.59 (24'45")

FILMING

Portmeirion

RECORDING

3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th May, 8th June 1976 (TC3)

Part 1: 351ft (16mm sound) Part 2: 295ft (16mm sound) Part 3: 50ft (16mm sound)

Part 4: 57ft (16mm sound)

MUSIC

MUSIC
Part 1: 8'09" (Dudley Simpson)
Part 2: 11'50" by Dudley Simpson
Part 3: 12'46" by Dudley Simpson
Part 4: 8'49" by Dudley Simpson, 55" Basse dane La
Brosse by P. Attaingnant, 52" Branle de Champagne by
C. Gervaise, 1'25" Istampita Cominciamento de giola
Ulsamer Collegium (last three from Tanzmusic der
Renaissance, Archiv 2533111)



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TELEVISION

Grandstand (BBC) The Invaders (Quinn Martin for ABC, 1967-8) Laramie (NBC/Revue, 1959-62)

The Prisoner (ITC/Everyman, filming at Portmeirion: September 1966 — all month, March 1967 — one week, Summer 1967(?) — one day) Space: 1999 (ITC/RAI/Gerry Anderson Productions, 1975-7)

The Wonderful World of Disney (Disney) World of Sport (ITV)

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udience

JEREMY BENTHAM watches the programmes fighting against DOCTOR WHO for the Saturday teatime ratings, back in the Autumn of 1976

UTUMN 1976 is when the BBC finally got it right. Their schedule of Saturday evening programmes on BBC1 attracted them not only all-time record audiences (most of the shows featured in the top twenty), but also a very loyal set of viewers. Most stayed with the channel from the end of the sports programmes, where Grandstand always scored better than ITV's World of Sport, through to the post-midnight closedown.

The chart shows the line-up of programmes on Saturday 4th September 1976, the official launch date for the BBC's Autumn season that year, and transmission date for the first episode of THE MASQUE OF MANDRAGORA (serial 4M). At this point the mix was not quite as strong as it would be in later months, the main weakness being the 5-6:00pm bridging slot. With DOC-TOR WHO due to show some of its strongest drama ever in Season 14, Programme Planning at the BBC game some heed to the National Viewers and Listeners Association, and agreed not to schedule the programme earlier than six o'clock. By this time it is assumed that working or shopping parents will be home to supervise their children.

OWEVER, while the imported Disney slot was a weak link, it was one which ITV failed to exploit. They often fielded little more than repeated syndication material in opposition. Granada Television is a good example, as the chart demonstrates. Seizing on the assumed sf hook of **Doctor Who**, the best they could offer was a rerun of Quinn Martin's The Invaders, with another US rerun, Laramie, to follow. This was an especially strange choice given the unfashionability of Westerns in the mid-Seventies.

The end result was that Doctor Who gained its second largest regional audience in the Granada area. Even ATV fared better. Also challenging with a science fiction theme, they offered a first showing of Space: 1999 year two despite the ratings lessons that London Weekend Television had learned in 1975.



ITV (GRANADA region)

SATURDAY 4th SEPTEMBER 1976

Sin rpt season repeat series season series -TRICKS new srs.	E r INVADERS LARAMIE W t start of (U.S)	new	new	new	WIVES E OF PA W	AQUARIUS Edinb'gh Festival new srs.
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9:30 10:00 10:30 11:00 7:00 7:30 8:00 8:30 9:00 6:30 5:00 5:30 6:00 BBC 2

	E THE	WORKSHOP:	CRICK	THE EARLY	E FILM;
CRICKET - live	W VERA LYNN	HARLEQUINN & FAUST arts			W Mad S Genius

